



BESTBUDDIES®

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD HANDBOOK & GUIDELINES

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Dear Best Buddies Advisory Board Member,

Thank you for serving as an advisory board member to Best Buddies. It's been almost 30 years since I started Best Buddies as a student at Georgetown University in 1989, and there is no way I could have envisioned just how much it would grow.

Best Buddies now touches millions of lives annually and our impact spans the globe, with programs present in 58 countries and counting. That means more friendships, more jobs, and more leadership opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, across the world.

The only way we've been able to grow, and the only way we'll continue to grow, is through great people - great staff who dedicate their careers to changing the landscape for people with exceptional abilities; great student leaders, teachers, and parents who live and breathe our mission daily; great buddies who continue to advocate and show the world just how capable they are; and great advisory board members like you.

Our advisory boards are pivotal to guiding our organization's efforts in each community. Your commitment to our mission will ensure the programmatic growth of Best Buddies throughout the country. As an advisory board member, you have a chance to steer our progress and profoundly impact your community. Thanks to your leadership, your insight and your influence, we know the future of Best Buddies in your area is bright.

I look forward to a time when Best Buddies is no longer needed and together, we will have built a truly inclusive world.

Sincerely,

Anthony Kennedy Shriver
Founder, Chairman & CEO
Best Buddies International

(left to right) **Steve Hearst**, Best Buddies International Board of Directors member, The Hearst Corporation; **Charles Calhoun**, Best Buddies Global Ambassador; and Best Buddies program participant at the *Best Buddies Challenge: Hearst Castle*



Advisory Board Purpose & Overview

The purpose of the Advisory Board is to support and advance the mission of Best Buddies.

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The Advisory Board is created at the community level to partner with local and national staff in order to personally engage in advancing the mission of Best Buddies through programmatic and fundraising outreach.

The State or Area Director in collaboration with the Advisory Board Chair, Advisory Board and other community volunteers, will work together to ensure annual goals are met.

Best Buddies Onboarding

Advisory Board Structure

- Recommend a minimum advisory board size of 12 but no more than 20 with 15-16 optimum
- Advisory Board members can be on-boarded at any point throughout the year; or all at once (nominated and approved by the current Advisory Board members in December, to commence January meeting attendance)

Advisory Board Member Structure

- Advisory Board Chair
- Advisory Board Chair-Elect/ Vice Chair (may be treated as incoming Advisory Board Chair, or not)
- Advisory Board Members
- Advisory Buddy Director (typically a Citizens participant or adult ambassador)

Term Limits

- Two year terms renewable up to 3 times (for a total of 6 years of consecutive service)
 - Additional consideration may be made by the advisory board for extended service
- Advisory Board Chairs should serve a two-year term in this role

Advisory Board Composition Considerations

- Diversity (age, ethnicity, gender, industry, geographic location, mission-focused (i.e. parents/non-parents)
 - Consider any stipulations for grants that may need you to have a specific Advisory Board diversity requirement
- Adult Program Participant
- Staggered terms for continuity and Advisory Board management
- Professional and community connectedness
- Appropriate representation from Citizens and school-based partners

Meeting Best Practices

- Recommend bi-monthly or monthly meetings 60 minutes in length
- Consistent meeting location (often a sponsor or Advisory Board member's company/organization)
- Annual strategic planning meeting
- Advisory Board Chair leads the meeting
- Agenda and previous minutes emailed 7 days before
 - Advisory Board Chair along with staff partner develop agenda
- Each Advisory Board member should confirm attendance (in-person) prior to meeting
- State Director and/or Senior State staff attend along with other appropriate staff
- Each Advisory Board should schedule an annual strategic planning/review session to discuss ongoing goals and initiatives, preferably at the beginning of the calendar year

Romero Britto, Best Buddies International Board of Directors member, Britto Central; Sebastian Cespedes, Friendship program participant; and Austin McKenzie, at the Britto Best Buddies Paint Party



Position Descriptions

In order to ensure that volunteers and staff work effectively together as a team toward Advisory Board goals, it is vital to identify specific duties and responsibilities for each role involved with the advisory board.

Once established, it is the responsibility of all Advisory Board members and staff to hold each other accountable for their defined roles.

The following outlines generally accepted position responsibilities of Advisory Board members and staff:

Advisory Board Chair

- Plans, leads and supports follow-up of each advisory board meeting in partnership with State Director
- Plays a leadership role representing Best Buddies with their employer, in the community and with all organization fundraising initiatives, and annually at the *Best Buddies Leadership Conference* (July)
- Holds state Advisory Board members accountable and supports effective communication and volunteer management between Advisory Board and staff

Chair-Elect

- Performs Advisory Board Chair's responsibilities in their absence at events, meetings and in the community
- Responsible ensuring effective transition into role of Advisory Board Chair at the end of term
- Act as an additional leader within the advisory board, including, but not limited to, chairing a standing committee or any ad hoc responsibilities as assigned by the Advisory Board Chair.

Advisory Buddy Director/Adult Ambassador (minimum of one/maximum of three)

- Attend regular meetings to learn more about the operations within the state
- Provide updates to fellow Advisory Board members on personal experiences as a program participant and keep appropriate focus on the mission in meetings
- Be available to serve as a spokesperson for the Advisory Board and programs at local and statewide events, as needed

Advisory Board Member

- Attend all standing meetings of the Advisory Board and any additional assigned standing committee meetings
- Be available to attend statewide and local programmatic and fundraising events
- Provide professional and personal feedback and advice to the Advisory Board and staff to advance the mission of Best Buddies

State or Area Director/Staff Partner

- Provide timely updates on the financial and operational status of the organization to the Advisory Board Chair and Advisory Board
- Hold Advisory Board Chair and Advisory Board members accountable for follow through and follow up on Advisory Board actions and efforts
- Cultivating relationships in the community to expand and increase the Advisory Board and its effectiveness

Program Staff

- Provide updates on current programs and expansion efforts within the organization
- Provide action items for Advisory Board members to engage in programmatic activities throughout the year
- Cultivate relationships with parents, advisors and community partners for possible Advisory Board engagement and outreach





Agenda Recommendations

ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mission Moment
 - Suggestions: Advisory Board members can take turns providing this, can be an anecdote/photo/etc. from a Program Event/Chapter activity, new Best Buddies video, etc.
- Each agenda item is an action item, not a report. Reports will be sent ahead of time giving Advisory Board members the opportunity to read prior to the meeting and then the item is a discussion/action item
- Advisory Board Chair report - with action items
- Program update and action needed
 - Put together by Programs Team and shared with Director and Advisory Board Chair
- Sustainability and funding-all action items needed
 - PROSPECTING! for upcoming fundraising events
 - Updates on grant requests; pull and review Advisory Board members of foundations to see if any Best Buddies Board members know them and can steward
 - Discuss donation opportunities – Giving Tuesday, Year-End, Major Gifts, etc.

- Committee Reports-with action items for advisory board
- Re-cap and identify top priorities to be completed by next meeting to ensure the entire board is on the same page
- State/Area Director follow up-with action items
- Advisory Board follow-up of action steps, deliverables and due dates should be conducted by State/Area Director within 48 hours of meeting

SAMPLE AGENDA

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ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA

DATE
LOCATION
TIME

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS
 - a. Any new members or guests announced
2. MISSION MOMENT
 - a. Video, letter, success story, etc.
3. CURRENT EVENT UPDATE
 - a. Action Items
4. PROGRAMMATIC UPDATE
 - a. Action Items
5. ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATES (GRANTS, BOARD GIVING, ETC.)
 - a. Action Items
6. NEXT BOARD MEETING
 - a. Next date and time with any additional action items

Thank you for your time and support!



BEST BUDDIES (STATE OFFICE) | Address | City, State, Zip | Phone



Volunteer Commitment

Volunteers are vital to the success of Best Buddies and the Advisory Board. It is important for Advisory Board members have set terms and responsibilities to have a clear understanding of the expectations of their role.

Below are guidelines to follow when communicating the roles, responsibilities, expectations and opportunities of an Advisory Board member:

1. Expectations should be uniformly applied to all Advisory Board members
2. Potential Advisory Board members should be evaluated based on criteria including:
 - a. Previously displayed commitment to Best Buddies
 - b. Time available to commit to Best Buddies Advisory Board meetings and events
 - c. Access to corporate or community resources
 - d. Representation of programs and partnerships within the community

3. Advisory Board members should be given multiple opportunities to invest as an Advisory Board member including, but not limited to:
 - a. Financial Support-
 - i. Individual Gifts - each Advisory Board member will make a personal gift. This is important to illustrate for other funding organizations that 100% of all Advisory Board members contribute personally
 - ii. Corporate Giving
 - iii. Matching Gifts
 - b. Community Building-
 - i. Recruiting volunteers
 - ii. Attending events
 - iii. Representing Best Buddies at local activities
 - c. Leadership-
 - i. Serve on a planning committee or organize a walk team
 - ii. Lead an Advisory Board Committee
 - iii. Advocate for Best Buddies issues at a community level
 - d. Other Opportunities
4. Advisory Board Member Evaluations
 - a. Advisory Board members should complete a volunteer commitment form annually
 - b. Advisory Board Chair and/or State/Area Director should review volunteer commitment forms at the end of each year with individual advisory board members to review role and accountability for met expectations

Additional Resources

1. Conflict of Interest Statements / Discovery
2. Non-Discrimination Practices
3. Strategic Planning Resources

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